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14816 POCKET GUIDE TO

NORTH AFRICA



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Prepared by

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A P O C K E T G U I D E T O

N O R T H A F R I C A



W A R A N D N A V Y D E P A R T M E N T S
W A S H I N G T O N , D . C .



"Looks just about the way I always imagined it would."

POCKET GUIDE TO NORTH AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

YOU are to do duty in North Africa as a soldier of the United States, and this guidebook has been prepared to assist you in serving in a strange country as well as to give you a more complete understanding of why you are fighting there and to make your service a more worthwhile personal experience.

No other American force has been given a more important mission. After the close of the First World War, one of the great strategists of Europe predicted that the

next great war would be won in North Africa. He foresaw such a rise in air power as would make the Mediterranean Sea virtually a defile for all shipping. If their enemies were to come into complete possession of the Mediterranean shores, an almost insupportable strain would be put upon the nations dependent on sea power. On the other hand, if the North African coast could be held by the sea-power nations—Great Britain and the United States—its air and sea bases would become the springboard to the reconquest of Europe and the final defeat of the forces dominating that continent.

THREE YEARS OF STRUGGLE

FOR more than three years, events have sustained this prophecy, and the armed forces of the United Nations and of the Axis have been locked in a tremendous struggle for North Africa. One campaign has followed another across its desert spaces. None was finally successful. For a time it seemed as if the whole of the Mediterranean and the land which surrounded it would be lost to our side. Fighting against tremendous odds and handicapped by shortages of air power and the necessity for deploying their war vessels over most of the waters of the globe, the British had to cease convoying through the Mediter-

anean except in cases of extreme emergency. Our supply had to make the 13,000-mile journey around the Cape of Good Hope to sustain the Allied forces in the Middle East and Egypt.

But while the Mediterranean lifeline was strained almost to the snapping point in those difficult years, it never broke. At the eastern end the British rallied around the defense of Alexandria and the Suez. At the western end of the sea the great fortress of Gibraltar held. In the center, menacing the German-Italian supply line to Africa, the island of Malta maintained one of the most heroic stands of the war supported by convoy moving in at times from either end of the Mediterranean.

SPRINGBOARD TO EUROPE

SLENDER though they seemed, Allied hopes for a successful turning of the war were fixed on these three points. Time is proving that this was the decisive calculation. The strong links in our vital supply line are again being pulled together by Allied weapons and manpower. Our armed forces are bringing North Africa under control, and from this base they will make the entry into Europe which will become the death wound of the Nazi and Fascist dictators and of their forces.

You are a part of this great enterprise. How well you

fight and work and how properly you conduct yourself in North Africa will mean much in furthering the cause of your country and her Allies.

WE WERE THERE BEFORE

IT is not strange ground for an American fighting man. More than 100 years ago, in the early days of the Republic, Americans fought over this same soil for their country's honor and on behalf of the principle of freedom of the seas. "To the shores of Tripoli" is a refrain sung proudly by American Marines. The American flag flew above the fortress of Derna in Libya in 1805, put there by an American soldier who campaigned through the desert to win respect for the United States. One of the first of our foreign wars resulted from the attempt by rulers of the Barbary States to hijack our ships when we were a weak nation. Even in that early day, the defense of the United States meant defending the right of our commerce to move freely through the most distant waters.

Now we have returned in strength to fight a much mightier enemy, but we are defending the same principles. So long as we maintain them, men will be free and humanity will have the chance for a decent existence. The North African shore is as desolate and the

interior is as uninviting now as when the fighting men under Preble and Decatur attacked Tripoli and William Eaton's scratch army of Americans and natives marched into Cyrenaica. But hardship did not stop Americans then and it will not stop them now.

Instruction in how to cope with the natural difficulties of your position, including how to maintain yourself in desert country and how to deal with your enemies, is primarily the responsibility of your commanders. The purpose of this book is to keep you from making mistakes in your dealings with the people of North Africa so that the United States will have their friendship and its armed forces will have their cooperation.

PEOPLE OF NORTH AFRICA

OF the 17 million people living in North Africa, about one-tenth are Europeans and their customs and traditions in the majority are those of the French and Italians of continental Europe. Your chief concern is with the nine-tenths whose ancestors have lived along this coast for centuries, and whose life is still regulated by ancient traditions and beliefs. For the most part, they are a fair-skinned people though some have the swarthiness which is commonly associated with a near-tropical climate. They are fully clothed—in fact, better clad than we are, if garments are

measured by the yard. They worship the same God as the Christians and the Jews, and speak with reverence of Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. Except for their religious leaders, most of them cannot read or write. Their opinions are formed on what they see and hear. Their experience has been that the European soldiers, officials, and colonists have often been domineering and unprincipled, and their natural inclination is to regard any invading force with suspicion until its good intentions are proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

The North Africans have no tanks or airplanes, and few machine guns. But they are producers of food, and they can either supply us water or poison the wells, guide us through mountains and desert or lead us astray. They can tell us what the Germans and Italians are doing if they like us or they can tell the Germans and Italians what we are doing if they dislike us. Winning their friendship is therefore an important step in the winning of the war.

THE BOND OF ISLAM

AS you move through North Africa you will be struck by the great variety of its peoples. You will hear a dozen tongues spoken in the course of an afternoon stroll or see as many different tribal costumes during a visit to one market place. Consequently, it is not possible to make

many generalizations about the population. The one bond which touches nearly all, however, is the religion founded by Mohammed. The people do not worship Mohammed as Christians worship Christ; they think of him as a prophet, like those of the Old Testament. The religion is called Islam (i-SLAM, meaning "submission to God") and the believers are called Moslems. Their Bible is the Koran.

Twelve centuries ago Moslems from Arabia swept over North Africa and fixed their religion on the inhabitants. While not all of the people absorbed the new beliefs in their entirety and clung to remnants of their old religion, Islam became the principal unifying force in North Africa. The Moslems swept on to conquer most of Spain, their great Empire reaching its zenith in the Middle Ages and beginning its swift decline just before the discovery of America. The present day North Africans have not forgotten their period of glory and they are as proud of their history as any democratic people.

POLITICAL DIVISIONS

THERE are four political divisions to North Africa, from west to east—Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. The Moroccan port of Casablanca is almost 2,000 miles in a

direct line from the western border of Egypt which means that our forces are bringing under control a shore line as extended as our own Atlantic Coast and Gulf Coast combined. But away from the coast there is little population or activity, and it is more than 1,000 miles from the Mediterranean to that part of the African interior where dwell the negro tribes.

The French have controlled Algeria for more than a hundred years, Tunisia for 60 years, and Morocco for the last 30 years. Spain administers a part of northern Morocco and the far southern part. Libya was an Italian possession when the war began. None of these conquests was easily made and although European exploitation has been in process for more than a century, there have been intermittent wars and resistant elements among the native populations in all of the North African states right up to the present time.

Many of the tribesmen are now first-class guerilla fighters, as ready to fight for their families or villages as for their tribe. Confronted by a common danger, the tribes might even join forces, or rally to a call to fight for Islam. But the alliance would probably dissolve as quickly as the fight was over, since there is no national unifying force among the tribes. This fact has been of main assistance to penetration by European powers.

COUNTRY OF CONTRASTS

NORTH AFRICA is a country of pronounced geographic and climatic contrasts. Along the coast the land is almost as pleasant as Southern California, with hot, dry summers and consistently heavy rains in winter. The forested mountains of Morocco and Algeria have a heavy winter snowfall, and excellent skiing grounds. Temperatures in the higher altitudes of all the coastlands fall below freezing on winter nights. South of the mountains and plateaus the true desert begins.

It is not a continuous sea of sand such as is pictured in Hollywood movies about the French Foreign Legion. Some parts of Sahara are great stretches of these picturesque dunes, but others are rim rock and gravel, and one may travel for days and see scarcely any sand. In places the horizon is perfectly flat while elsewhere the skyline may be broken by jagged hills or tablelands not unlike the mesas of New Mexico and Arizona.

Most of the desert is too barren of vegetation to support cattle grazing, though camels and goats may subsist upon it. Rain falls but rarely, though then in such large doses that bivouac commanders should take care not to make camp in a ravine or in the bottom of a desert valley. After sunset the desert cools off rapidly. The warmth of the

winter sunshine is usually tempered by a steady wind, and the winter nights—especially in the highlands of the central Sahara or on the Libyan Plateau—are bitterly cold.

TOWN AND COUNTRY

NORTH AFRICA has but a few important cities—Tangier, Casablanca, Fez, and Marrakech in Morocco, Algiers, Oran, and Constantine in Algeria, Tunis in Tunisia, and Tripoli and Benghazi in Libya, the largest of which are about the size of Birmingham or Dallas. As most of the houses are crowded closely together along narrow streets, the towns cover less ground than American communities with a comparable population. The new European set-

tlements, however, are usually built separate from the old Moslem sections and are more cleanly and spacious.

The coastal plains and the valleys are the farming sections. In northern Morocco and Algeria, you will see vast expanses of well-farmed country, mainly grain fields and vineyards belonging to the French. The Moslems farm on a more modest scale; their fields are small and irregular and their implements crude. Because of the uncertainty of rainfall, most of them specialize in fruit trees which can withstand drought. They raise large quantities of figs and olives, extracting the olive oil by hand processes, and drying the figs for export.

ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE
EXCAVATED AT
CARTHAGE, TUNISIA



A more highly specialized type of farming has developed around the oases of the Sahara. These desert communities were founded in the Middle Ages when caravans were crossing the wastes bringing slaves, ivory, and other treasure from the interior. The North African coastlands were then wracked by incessant tribal wars and refugees by the thousand moved south into the desert. They took possession of small spring-fed water holes, dug wells, and installed irrigation systems. In these surroundings the date palm flourished as nowhere else. When the slave trade was suppressed and the commerce of tropical Africa was diverted away from the Saharan routes to America and European markets, the oases suffered a depression from which they have never recovered. Those in the north survive pretty well, however, on their export of dates.

In the Sahara the nomadic peoples depend on camels for transportation and as a source of milk. Though ill-tempered and subject to various sores and diseases, the camel is pretty nearly indispensable, for it can travel up to five days without water or pasturage and is a stout freight carrier. The nomads value their camels and horses above all other possessions. Raising camels, stealing camels and riding camels into a fight are regarded as the most honorable of employments. Many camel riders of the Sahara are professional bandits. It is a natural reaction

to their surroundings. The country offers them very little other chance for success. They believe that property belongs to the strongest claimer and they like the fighting life.

DINING WITH MOSLEMS

AS to food, if a Moslem asks you to dinner, you will probably be served barbecued sheep, mutton stew, chicken or squab. That will be a sign that you are rated an honored guest, for most Moslems eat very little meat. Animals are almost too precious to kill, and meat is hard to preserve because of the lack of refrigeration.

The mainstay of most Moslems is grain, made into either bread or mush. Also the Moslems make the grain into a fluffy dish called kuskus (KOOS-koos) or seksu (SEK-soo), which is tasty when seasoned with pepper or cinnamon. Kuskus is to be eaten neatly with the fingers of the right hand, though it is advisable not to drink much liquid after eating it as the grain is only partly cooked and bloating will result.

North Africans are great eaters of bread. If you enter a bakery, leave your shoes at the door, as the baker slides the loaves out of the oven onto the floor and the customers object to having dirt tracked in from the street.

Fruits come second on the list of staple foods. Figs, dates, grapes, and apricots are probably the most common

and are eaten fresh in season or dried for use during the rest of the year. As with all fruits, dates should be skinned before eating. This can be done by clipping off one end of the date and squeezing it out of its skin. If the dates have begun to dry, you had better boil them in water for a few minutes and then let them cool.

Vegetables are plentiful, especially onions, tomatoes, turnips, okra, peppers, and string beans. Dried lentils which look like split peas are used for soup.

Among the Moslem nomads goat's milk is an important food. Most of it is curdled, or made into butter and cheese. You may not like the taste of sour milk, but it is refreshing on a hot day. Fresh milk should always be boiled before drinking.

Thick coffee served in small cups is drunk in the large towns where Turkish customs prevail though in most of North Africa the favorite beverage is green tea. It is served sweet, and flavored with mint. If offered either drink by a native host, you should not refuse it or throw away any part of it. The polite thing is to accept three cups if they are offered, but under no circumstances to accept a fourth. To drink less than three is considered as ill-bred as to take more than that.

Though their religion forbids the use of intoxicants, some Moslems take a drink on occasion. A liquor called

legbi or lebqi (LEG-bee or LEB-kee) is made from the fermented sap of the date palm; grape wines are also common to the region. Most Moslems smoke tobacco, though it is prohibited by some of the religious brotherhoods and outsiders are advised not to smoke in the presence of sacred things such as a mosque, the tomb of a saint, or a religious book. American cigarettes are much appreciated by both men and women.

You will also see Moslems smoking an herb which they call keef. It is a variety of Indian hemp, the powdered leaf of which is known in our country as marihuana. It makes the smoker careless and talkative, is habit-forming,



and produces rapid moral deterioration in the smoker. Moslem authorities condemn it. French law prohibits it, but there is a large bootleg traffic in keef.

In general, it is dangerous for a soldier in North Africa to eat or drink anything offered him by a stranger on the street, or to go to cafes or resorts of any kind with a Moslem who has not been properly vouched for.

CUSTOMS AT MEALTIME

BUT if a reputable Moslem is entertaining you in his home, you should eat and drink a little of everything that is offered. This may require some hardihood, especially if you suspect that any of the food handlers may be diseased. But it would not be possible to explain your fears to your host without insulting him; to refuse what he offers is to make him suspect that you fear being poisoned.

When invited to a meal, you should sit on the floor with the rest. After grace (Bismillah) is said, you wait for the host to dip into the food before making your move. Eat only with the right hand; Moslems never use the left in partaking of food because that hand is used exclusively in attending to a call of nature. These other simple rules will enable you to play well your part as guest at a Moslem meal.

Eat with your fingers and out of the same bowl.

Do not cut native bread with a knife, but tear it with your fingers.

Observe the other guests, and try to follow their example.

DETAILS OF NATIVE DRESS

THE study of costumes and of native dress is one key to an understanding of the people. While the Moslems of Morocco and Libya do not as a rule wear western dress, many in Algeria and Tunisia do so, adding a red fez to their attire to indicate that they are not Christians. Away from the towns, one rarely sees European dress and it is usually easy to guess from a man's costume the part of North Africa or the tribe to which he belongs.

The camel riders of the southern Sahara, Tauregs, wear a dress of indigo blue with a turban which is wound around the lower half of the face to shield the mouth and nostrils from blowing sand and the desert wind. The men of the Taureg tribe wear a face veil as a matter of modesty and custom. In the mountains of Morocco and Algeria the commonest garment for the men is the jellaba (jel-LAB-a) which is a coat of coarse wool with a pointed hood dropped over one shoulder. A man can carry several day's rations in this hood and the color blends perfectly with the landscape.

Among the Libyan nomads the typical apparel is the "gerd," a rectangular woolen cloak about 12 feet long by 5 feet wide which is tied over the left shoulder and wrapped around the body. In winter it protects the wearer from the cold, and at night can be used as a blanket. It can be drawn across the face to shut out sand or strong sunlight, and its folds can easily conceal a knife or a gun. In Libya wealthy men wear a gerd like that of the nomads but made of fine white silk instead of wool.

When seen in public, a Moslem woman is usually covered from head to foot in a plain white wrapper, with a white veil stretched across her face just beneath the eyes. But under this unattractive costume, the women wear garments of very bright colors which are revealed only in the privacy of their homes, the idea being that a Moslem woman is not supposed to look attractive in public. The veil likewise is a sign of respectability, distinguishing ladies from scrub women. In the country districts, where women do the heavy labor of the farm and household, they seldom cover their faces. Oddly enough, however, when a girl from the red-light district walks abroad, she is muffled to the eyes in white wrapper and veil. These few rules are to be strictly observed with relation to the Moslem women:

Never stare at one.

Never jostle her in a crowd.

Never speak to her in public.

Never try to remove the veil.

This is most important. Serious injury if not death at the hands of Moslem men may result if these few rules are not followed.

SHOPS AND MARKETS

AS to your dealing with the tradesmen, it is wisdom to greet the shopkeeper as ceremoniously as if he were your host. Bargaining and haggling over prices are the expected thing. By accepting it as a game, you should be able to get from one to two-thirds knocked off the original asking price. But bargaining is always to be done politely and abusiveness is a sure way to provoke the hostility of even the humblest Moslem.

In the towns the permanent market is usually built around an open square. Many villages, especially in Morocco and Algeria, hold a market once a week and some are named according to the day, for example Suq el Khamis (sooq-el-kha-MEES) meaning Thursday Market. The market is both a trading and social center where goods are bought and exchanged, marriages are arranged and political deals are made. Life throbs there as nowhere



else in the North Africa countryside. Dancing girls and boys, singers, jugglers, fortune tellers, magicians, pitchmen, and pickpockets all contribute to the excitement.

During religious festivals such as Mulid en Nebi (MOO-lid-en NEB-i) meaning the Prophet's Birthday, which comes February 10 to 19, 1943, and January 30 to February 7, 1944, every large town holds a fair. Your tour of duty will be more enjoyable if the situation permits you to participate in the North African fairs and markets. It goes almost without saying that your conduct must be discreet at all times, and you are best advised never to discuss the military situation with or within the hearing of any of the inhabitants, as the market is a clearing ground for rumors and any told is given a wide circulation. The Axis may be expected to have planted agents in North Africa before our forces arrived. They may be still operating, so conversations on military subjects anywhere should be well guarded.

You will find several different money systems used in North Africa and you should know something about them. There are four chief kinds of currency: two for French Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, one for Spanish Morocco; and one for Libya.

(1) French Controlled Currency. This includes paper francs and metal pieces of the protectorates of Morocco and Al-

geria, and money issued by the Bank of Algeria. The metal pieces are issued in denominations of 5, 10, 25, and 50 centimes, and 1 and 2 francs. Most of the old copper coins for 5 and 10 centimes have been withdrawn. The newer coins of 5, 10, and 25 centimes look like an American nickel, but have a hole in the center. They are composed of light aluminum alloy. Coins of 50 centimes, 1 franc, and 2 francs have a light gilded appearance and are probably made of a copper-aluminum alloy. Paper notes, in various colors, are issued for 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 francs.

(2) Spanish Currency. This is used in the Spanish Zone and the International Zone of Morocco. It is ordinary Spanish money, consisting of 5 and 10 centimo coins, made of a copper aluminum alloy, and of paper notes 1, 2, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 pesetas. The peseta is divided into 100 centimos.

(3) Italian Currency. Before the Italian conquest of Libya, Egyptian and Turkish coins were used throughout Libya, and they may still be circulating in some of the more isolated district. The official coin of Libya is now the Italian lira, which is divided into 100 centesimi. Silver coins are issued in denominations of 5, 10, and 20 lire; nickel coins in denominations of 20 centesimi, 50 centesimi, 1 lira, and 2 lire; and bronze coins of 5 and 10 cen-

tesimi. Since 1936, Italy has issued "Imperial" coins of the same denominations as above, with the addition of 50- and 100-lira gold pieces. Italian paper money is issued in state notes of 10 lire, and in bank notes of 50, 100, 500, and 1,000 lire. The 10-lira notes have recently been issued to replace the 10- and 20-lira silver coins. A few of the latter may be still in circulation. The Moslems of Libya still feel that precious metal—especially gold—is the best material for money, and they may refuse to accept paper currency when large payments are to be made.

(4) The "Hassani" (ha-SA-nee). This is a coin used in Morocco before the French took control. It is either silver or copper. The silver coin is based on the value of the silver in it. Hassani money has been officially withdrawn from circulation for many years, but people in some remote parts of Morocco still use it.

The local names for currency are often different from the French and Spanish. The North Africans call 5 francs 1 rial (ree-YAL). For them, the rial consists of 100 soldi (Sol-dee), each soldi being thus 5 French centimes. The same is true of Spanish money; the North Africans consider 5 pesetas to be 1 rial.

It is impossible to give the exact rates of exchange for these different types of money, since many different rates, such as official, free, draft, currency, etc., are in

existence, and these rates vary considerably from time to time. The official rate for the franc in French North Africa is 2.28 American cents and for the peseta in Spanish Morocco 9.13 American cents. The Italian lira has recently been worth about $5\frac{1}{4}$ American cents. Generally speaking, possessors of American money can usually make purchases at a great advantage, especially since the North Africans are often willing to pay high exchange rates for American currency.

The system of weights generally used in North African towns is the metric system. The metric kilogram is about 2.2 (two and one-fifth) of our pound.

Measures of distance are also metric. The meter is 39.37 inches. A thousand meters is a kilometer or just about five-eighths of a mile. All highway distances are calculated in kilometers. The meter is divided into 100 centimeters which are something less than half an inch. A centimeter in turn is 10 millimeters.

Liquids in the metric system are usually measured in liters which unit is a little more than one of our liquid quarts.

In the country districts you will find few Moslems who know this metric system. Their own weights and measures vary locally and are seldom applied with precision.

The North Africans reckon longer distances in terms

of days' journey. They will tell you that it is so many days' march from place A to place B. This means that if you walk fairly rapidly, as they do, from sunrise to sunset, with a little time out for a nap at noon, you will just about get there.

North Africans tell time in the same way we do—when they have clocks and watches. Many of them, however, are very vague on the subject. They will say that a certain thing will happen at dawn, mid-morning, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, midnight. Even then these are vague approximations.

NORTH AFRICAN SOCIAL LIFE

THE social life of North Africa is very different from our own, not only because of its leisurely character, but because Moslem men do not make companions of their women. A man's wife attends to the home, bears children, and may work in the fields, but she is in the position of a chattel. If her husband cannot afford to support more than one wife, he still can divorce her with ease and be free to marry again.

It is not conventional for men and women to make dates. Should a respectable woman be found conversing with a man not of the family, scandal will result and sudden death is apt to overtake one or both parties. When

a woman walks abroad with a man—even though he be a member of the family—she keeps several paces behind him so that people will not notice them together. Ladies never attend parties with men and seldom eat or drink with them even in the family. Feasts at the time of weddings or circumcisions are enjoyed by men and women in separate groups in separate parts of the house.

When Moslem men want the company of women at a party, they engage a troupe of professional dancing girls. These professionals have a unique social position, not as

VILLAGE BLACKSMITH OF MOROCCO



low as that of the prostitute, but still somewhat degraded. They are said to be more interesting company than the Moslem wife because they get around a great deal and know all the answers. They dance for the men, not with them. Men have dances of their own, but when a Moslem gentleman is seen dancing it is usually a sign that he is a bit plastered.

Moslem houses are arranged to obtain the greatest possible privacy. Windows are small and high. The rooms of the larger houses are grouped around a patio where the women work in the open air. The flat roof serves as a private terrace where the family can get the sun in winter and sleep on the warm summer nights.

Moslem hosts do not show their guests into the bedroom to leave their coats and hats. If you are invited to dinner, visit the rear before you go, since your host will never offer to show you to the toilet and a request to be taken there would cause confusion. Only the room in which you are received is cleared for visitors.

WARNING THE WOMEN

IN towns such as Fez where small houses are scarce, several families may occupy the same dwelling. The various female occupants will then mingle freely in the courtyard and on the roof but the males are restricted to their own

family apartments. Upon coming to the main entrance at any time they give warning to the women. You will want to know how this is done, since in case you need to go through a Moslem home for any purpose, it will be necessary for some member of the family to remove all of the women beforehand. When you are about to enter a house or a yard, call out to the women to cover their faces or get out of the way. There are conventional ways of doing this in most of the towns, but if you have not learned the local custom, you may use the word taghattu (ta-GHAT-too) which means: "Cover up!"

STUDY THE LANGUAGE

THE original language of North Africa is called Berber. It is still spoken by thousands of people in Morocco and by scattered communities in Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. The Arabic language which spread over North Africa with the Moslem religion, is now understood almost everywhere except in the remote mountain villages. Even where the women and children speak only Berber, you will always find men who can speak Arabic. You do not need to know many words to get by in Arabic; a few will go a long way. Talk to the North Africans in their own language. They will like you for it and will not be offended at peculiarities in your pronunciation.

THE FAITH OF ISLAM

TO understand the Moslem you will need to know something of his religion. Islam developed against a background of Christianity and of the religion of the Jews. Mohammed tried to draw the people back to the teachings of the prophets. He declared that there is only one God to whom every man is directly responsible without priests or intermediaries of any kind, and he condemned the use of images and elaborate rituals, and preached against the same vices which are the targets of the average American evangelist. His teachings are reflected in Moslem practice. The mosques are not temples but meeting houses where the congregations foregather for prayers and meditation. There are no priests. The main religious obligations—to proclaim the oneness of God, to give alms to the poor, to pray, and to fast—are fulfilled by a high proportion of the people.

All true Moslems observe a month of fasting each year called Ramadan (ra-ma-DAN) which is similar to our Lenten period. During Ramadan the Moslems do not eat, drink, or smoke between sunrise and sunset. Their tempers are accordingly short and they have to be treated with extra consideration. As to special precautions, these points are worth remembering:

Moslems should not be offered food, drink, or smokes during Ramadan except after dark.

They will not permit any substance to be put into their bodies during the days of Ramadan.

Any accident to a Moslem which results in the drawing of blood is apt to have especially serious consequences in this period.

They should not be asked for sustenance of any kind.

In North Africa the Moslems have somewhat elaborated Mohammed's original teachings. One of the added touches is a belief in what is called "el 'Ain," or the Evil Eye. People may have this power without knowing or wishing it, and it is supposed they put a curse upon anyone on whom they look with envy. Because of belief in the Evil Eye a Moslem hates to have you say to him: "How well you look today!" or "What a fine son you have today!" Compliments of this kind if expressed at all should be preceded by "El hamdu li 'allah!" (el HAM-doo lil-LA) meaning "Praise be to God!" which takes the curse off it. Some Moslems resent having their pictures taken, because they believe that the camera is an instrument of the Evil Eye.

LAND OF LIVING SAINTS

ANOTHER important practice is the worship of saints. Mohammed didn't hold with this idea yet saints' tombs



and habitations adorn the landscape from Morocco to Egypt. Saints are of all kinds. They may be living or dead. They may belong to saintly families whose reputation for piety goes far back or they may be simply very clever and religious people with a capacity for leadership—like Sister McPherson or Father Divine. Again they may be idiots since North Africans tend to believe that humans who cannot keep their minds on earthly things may have a divine spark.

A male saint is called "marabut" (ma-RA-but) and a female "marabuta" (ma-RA-bu-ta). They alike are supposed to possess a mysterious power called "baraka" (BA-ra-ka). Devout people approaching a saint bow and

kiss his hand believing that the touch will do them good along such lines as curing the sick, making barren women fertile, or providing a charm against some danger. Even the tomb of a saint is supposed to be capable of miracle working, and offerings of food and incense are brought to it.

The most religious Moslems in North Africa are organized as brotherhoods which owe allegiance to a living leader. The largest and best-known of these brotherhoods in the eastern part of North Africa is the Sanusi (see-NOO-see) which was founded about 150 years ago. It aimed to purify the Moslem religion and taught its members to live temperately. Coffee and smoking were forbidden. Missionaries led by members of the Sanusi family set up hundreds of religious schools (each one called a ZA-wia) throughout Libya and the eastern Sahara. They settled and cultivated several large oases. Most of Libya came under their control.

But they lacked the means to hold their country against armored cars, planes, and machine guns. By 1935 the Italians had taken their land and massacred the people by thousands. With our help the Sanusi may stage a comeback. They are an exceptionally fine people.

The deep religious faith of Moslems is especially evident in their feeling about their places of worship—the mosques

and the tombs of saints. *Keep away from mosques and the tombs of saints.* The Moslems will not tolerate Christians inside of them.

Most of the attitudes of North Africans are of religious origin. Like all firm believers they feel that the souls of those of other faiths will not be saved. It follows that non-believers are inferior people—if not in this world certainly in the next. Consequently Christians or Jews are considered inferior by every true Moslem. In recent times, however, Moslems have had little opportunity to express their feeling of superiority toward Christians, but they have dominated a native Jewish population for many centuries. Their attitude toward Jews is religious, and not racial as in Germany, but it is a topic which should not be discussed with any Moslem.

POSITION OF THE JEWS

IN the large towns of North Africa you will find thousands of Jews who have lived on intimate terms with the Moslems for hundreds of years. Many of them are descended from Jewish families which were expelled from Spain with the Moslems a few years before the discovery of America. In North Africa, however, the Jews rarely live among Moslems but occupy a distinct section of the town,

which section is called the Mellah (MEL-lah). The men wear small black skullcaps; the women wear fringed shawls and do not veil their faces. The Jews tend to engage in special trades and professions, such as money lending, jewelry making, metal working, and the keeping of retail stores. Many of them speak Spanish as well as Arabic.

RULES FOR HEALTH

SANITARY conditions vary in North Africa. In the European sections of the bigger towns Europeans and Americans have to take no more precautions than at home. But in the rural parts of much of North Africa, especially in the Spanish Zone of Morocco, sanitation is very poor. An important rule to follow: do not eat food sold by native vendors in the street or in small shops.

The principal diseases of the country are typhus, malaria, syphilis, all of the typhoid variants, skin diseases, and amoebic dysentery. One form of typhus in North Africa is carried by lice; another form, similar to our Rocky Mountain fever, is transmitted by ticks. Syphilis and yaws are very prevalent. In some areas almost 100 percent of the population are affected.

Red and black varieties of the scorpion can give a nasty sting, and an unattended bite from a local cobra or asp will kill you.

The same rules for personal hygiene apply as elsewhere. You must keep your body clean. Inspect your clothes frequently for lice and ticks. These animals frequent the seams of clothing. Since they carry typhus they should be disposed of as quickly as possible. You should use your mosquito net if you do not want to contract malaria.

You should do little sun bathing, and though cases of sunstroke are rare, you should particularly be on guard against too much sun in summer. In a hot, dry climate it is very easy to get a bad burn during a relatively short exposure. This is especially true at the seaside. Never walk about in the sun without some form of headgear. It is not always necessary to wear a conventional sun helmet—a campaign hat or other helmet is usually sufficient. The liner of your infantry helmet is an ideal tropical headpiece.

Great care should be taken in regard to drinking water. Filter the water whenever possible. Avoid drinking from streams and public wells and fountains, above all those in centers of habitation. The safest rule is to drink water only from a chlorinated lister bag. When that isn't possible and you are among Moslems it is a good idea to drink it in the form of tea. That is what the natives do and they make sure to boil the water a long time.

You will often hear it said that you must never eat



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fruits or green vegetables. Since these foods contain valuable vitamins it is desirable to eat them provided they are served by a well-established restaurant or have been inspected by competent military authorities. But by all means avoid all fruits and vegetables which have been lying around in city markets.

SOME GENERAL RULES

WHEN you meet a Moslem he will want to shake hands. Do it gently! Do not pump his hand or squeeze too

hard. Many of them, especially the city Moslems, have fine hands which are easily hurt. A Moslem may even kiss your hand, or raise his fingers to his lips afterward. Do not laugh at him; it is his way of showing politeness. Above all, do not slap him on the back and do not handle him; do not push him in fun or try to wrestle with him, or touch his body in any way, even if you think you know him well.

Moslems do not let other people see them naked. Do not urinate in their presence. They do it squatting and dislike to see people do it standing up. These things may seem trivial, but they are important.

North Africans, by and large, have an excellent sense of humor. You will not find it difficult to joke with them because they see the humor in situations easily. If they laugh at you, take it; don't get angry. Above all, *never strike them*. They do not know how to box; one right on the jaw would knock a Moslem down. You would make an enemy of everyone that saw you, and word would soon spread around that all Americans are bruisers. Moslems fight with knives, and they are probably a lot better at it than you are.

Aside from these few rules, it is well to remember that a man may wear skirts and a beard and still be a man. We need the friendship of these people. We need their

willing cooperation in maintaining ourselves in their country and we may require their active help in the fight against the common enemy. To be deserving of it, we must treat them with respect and with dignity. Not to do so may make the difference between success and failure in the great undertakings now facing you and your fellow Americans.

LIST OF DO'S AND DON'TS

DON'T enter mosques.

Smoke or spit somewhere else—never in front of a mosque. If you come near a mosque, look away and keep moving. Avoid shrines or tombs in the country.

Discuss something else—*never* religion or women—with Moslems.

Keep silent when Moslems are praying, and don't stare at them.

Don't refer to the people as heathen; they are very religious.

Shake hands gently and avoid touching other parts of the body.

Remember that the Moslems are a very modest people and avoid any exposure of the body in their presence.

Always say *Bismillah* before food when eating with North Africans.

Always say *Hamdullah* at the end of the meal.
Start eating only after your host has begun.
Always tear your bread with your fingers—never cut it.
Eat with your right hand—never with your left, even if you are a southpaw.
Leave food in the main bowl—what you leave goes to the women and children.
Eat only part of the first course—there may be four or five more coming.
Don't give Moslems food containing pork, bacon, or lard, or cooked in pork products.
Don't eat pork or pork products near Moslems.
Be pleasant if Moslems refuse to eat meat which you offer.
They may consider it religiously unclean.
Don't give Moslems alcoholic drinks.
Don't drink liquor in the presence of Moslems.

Knock before seeking admission into a house. If a woman answers, wait outside until she has had time to retire.
Take off your shoes before entering a room—leave your socks on.
When visiting, don't overstay your welcome. The third glass of tea or coffee is the signal to go, unless you are quartered there.
Don't bring a dog into the house.
Be kind to beggars. They are mostly honest unfortunates. Give them 25 centimes occasionally if you can spare it.
When you see grown men walking hand in hand, ignore it. They are not "queer."
Be kind and considerate to servants. The Moslems are very democratic.
Avoid any expression of race prejudice. The Moslems draw no color line.



Speak Arabic to the people if you can. No matter how badly you do it, they like it.

Avoid talking about or praising Europeans.

Don't use the French word *indigene*, meaning "native."

This is an insulting term.

Accept with reserve what local Europeans tell you about North Africans.

Don't imitate the attitudes or behavior of many of the local Europeans. Some are not held in high respect by the North Africans.

Shake hands gently on meeting and leaving.

If you wish to give someone a present, make it tea, sugar, or cigarettes. A polite gift is three of the large conical loaves of sugar.

If you are stationed in the country, it is a good idea to take tea, sugar, and cigarettes with you when you visit a North African home.

Bargain on prices. Don't let shopkeepers or merchants overcharge you. But be polite.

Treat people of all classes as equals.

Be polite. North Africans appreciate courtesy.

Be generous with your cigarettes.

Use common sense on all occasions. These people are basically no different from anyone else.

Be sure to greet people with the proper salutations:

Good morning—*sbah 'l k'heir*

Good afternoon or evening—*msa 'l k'heir*

In the name of God (used when you start to eat, etc.)—*bis-MIL-lah*

Thank you, or please (use it whenever possible)—*BA-ra-ka LAU-fik*

How are you?—*La bes?*

I am fine, thanks—*la bes, baraka laufik*

If God is willing (used whenever you say you are going to do something. To omit this phrase is irreligious.)—*in-SHAL-la*

Thank God!—*ham-dul-LA*

OTHER ARABIC PHRASES

[English—*Arabic*]

Yes, O. K.—*Al-wa, NA-am* (in Morocco, *WA-ha*)

No—*LA*

Perhaps (when hope is expressed)—*in-SHAL-la*

How much?—*kam?* (in Morocco, *sha-HAL*).

Too much—*ke-TEER, zee YA-da* (in Morocco, *bi-ZEF bi-ZEF*)

Take it easy—*shwai-shwai*

Go! Scram!—*IM-sheel rohh! seer fee HAL-ek!*

Come here!—*A-jee HIN-na!*

Where?—*fain?*

Where's the road to . . .?—*fain et ta-REEQ li . . .?*

Where is water?—*fain el MA?*

Take! Grab hold!—*kħud!* (in Morocco, *hak!*)

It is very cold—*BA-rid kħe-TEER* (in Morocco, *bird bi-ZEF*)

It is very hot—*sukħn kħe-TEER* (in Morocco, *skħon bi-ZEF*)

Get up! (to a horse or mule)—*ar-rah!*

Get up! (to a donkey)—*ri!*

Whoa!—*sha*

Help us!—*a-AWin-na*

I want water—*AW-wiz MOY-ya* (in Morocco, *n-bree el MA*)

